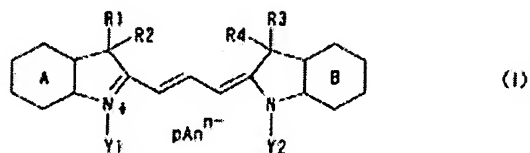


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A cyanine compound represented by general formula (I):



wherein ring A and ring B each represent a benzene or naphthalene ring that may be substituted; at least one of the pair of adjacent groups R1 and R2 and the pair of adjacent groups R3 and R4 represent a pair of benzyl groups, and the other paired groups each represent an alkyl group having 1 to 4 carbon atoms or are connected to each other to form a 3- to 6-membered ring, and when one of the other pair of groups is not a pair of benzyl groups, then these each are an alkyl group of 1 to 4 carbon atoms or are connected to form a 3 to 6 member ring; Y1 and Y2 each represent an organic group having 1 to 30 carbon atoms; An^{m-} represents an m-valent anion; m represents an integer 1 or 2; and p represents a coefficient for maintaining the charge neutrality.

2. (currently amended) The cyanine compound of claim 1, wherein both of the pair of adjacent groups R1 and R2 and the pair of adjacent groups R3 and R4 represent a pair of benzyl groups.

3. (currently amended) The cyanine compound of claim 1, wherein ring A and/or ring B constituting ~~[[the]]~~ a heterocyclic ring with the adjacent two benzyl groups is a naphthalene ring.

4. (currently amended) An optical recording material containing the cyanine compound of claim 1, wherein~~[[,]]~~ the optical recording material is formed on a substrate to make an optical recording medium.

5. (previously presented) An optical recording medium comprising a substrate and a thin film of the optical recording material of claim 4 on the substrate.